Vol. VI. Numb. 67

THE OBSERVATOR.

Remarks on the taking of Suza *and* Gaeta *by the Allies, and of* Ciudad Rodrigo *by the* French. *The Miscarriage of the Design on* Thoulon, *not chargeable on the Duke of* Savoy *or Prince* Eugene. *The Danger of Generals growing too powerful. The Effects of neglecting the* Spanish West Indies. *The Necessity of early Support to King* Charles *the* III.

From **Saturday**, October 18. to **Wednesday**, October 21. 1707.

Obs. I Perceive you are just come from *London, Roger*; what News do the last foreign Mails bring?

Country-m. They confirm the Surrender of the Castle of *Suza* to Prince *Eugene*, Master; and that the Imperialists have taken *Gaeta* by Storm.

Obs. That's well on our Side, *Roger*; but pray how goes it in *Spain*?

Country-m. Not so well there, Master; for the Duke of *Anjou*'s Party have taken *Ciudad Rodrigo* by Storm, are gone to raise the Siege of *Moura*, and, if we may believe *French* Advices, are like to be Masters of *Lerida* in a little Time.

Obs. I am sorry to hear that, *Roger*; for if it be so, the Ballance still turns on their Side, as it has done all this Campaign.

Country-m. Why so, Master? Prince *Eugene* has made the Garrison of *Suza* Prisoners of War, and has taken a fine Train of Artillery there, with all their Ammunition and Provisions. Besides, *Suza* will be a Place of Arms for the Confederates, and enable 'em to invade *Dauphine*.

Obs. That the taking of *Suza* is a Matter of great Importance, and an Action worthy of the Conduct of such Great Generals as the Duke of *Savoy* and Prince *Eugene*, will readily be agreed to, *Roger*; but I am afraid the Winter is too far advanc'd, for the Allies to make any Impression on *Dauphine* this Season. 'Tis well if they recover any considerable Part of *Savoy*, out of the Hands of the *French*, during the Winter; for 'tis not very probable they should do much against *Dauphine* now, if it be true, that the *French* are fortifying *Briancon* and *Embrun*; but if it happen otherwise, we must reckon it a Work of Supererogation, and wholly owing to the extraordinary Vigilance and Conduct of those two Generals, at whose Door I believe the Miscarriage of the Design upon *Thoulon*, will not be found to lie, *Roger*, if the Parliament of *Great Britain*, the Dyet of *Germany*, and the States of *Holland*, think fit to enquire into it.

Country-m. I hope they will, Master; for I am sure nothing could have tended more to the Security of *England* and *Holland*, than to have had the *French* King's Naval Power destroy'd; and it concern'd us more than any Body else, to concur in it, to make *Europe* a Compensation for our Courts having not only suffer'd the *French* King to augment his Naval Force, but putting him in a Way to do it in the Reign of King *Charles* the II.

Obs. That's true, *Roger*; but we have too many People among us, who were concern'd in the destructive Measures of that Prince, and of his Brother the late King *James*; and there's no Doubt but they will, to the utmost of their Power, prevent a Redress of 'em.

Country-m. I am afraid so too, Master. But to the rest of our foreign News; what do you think of the taking of *Gaeta*, with so much Riches, and so many Princes and Lords of the Duke of *Anjou*'s Faction?

Obs. I like it very well, *Roger*; but had much rather those Forces should have been imploy'd in reducing *Thoulon*, or assisting King *Charles* to recover *Spain*; for every Foot of Ground we lose there, and on the Side of *Portugal*, is worth five of what we take in *Italy*. Besides, *Roger*, I should think it but fair, that the Riches and the Ransoms of those Princes and Lords, taken at *Gaeta*, *&c.* should go to the carrying on of the War, and not to cramb the Purses of Generals, while the poor People lie under heavy Taxes; for that's the Way to make those Men spin out the War for their own private Advantage.

Country-m. I am of your Mind, Master; 'tis pitty People should be Fools, and let such Beasts of Prey, as Souldiers of Fortune, raise themselves to excessive Riches, out of their Ruins, as if War were undertaken for nothing else, but to enrich such Harpies by Plunder, Safeguards, and Presents. I should think the Salleries arising from their Posts, and the Honour of serving one's Country, Reward enough for any honest Man, without heaping such Wealth and and Dignities upon them, as may put them in a Condition to undermine the Liberties of the Subject, and to turn out their Masters. I have heard, that the Crown of *Spain* has been in Danger of losing the Kingdom of *Naples*, by their too potent Generals and Viceroys, ere now. We may also remember the Time, when *Oliver Cromwell*, who was only a Lieutenant General, did, by his Interest in the Army, overturn the Parliament, murder the King, and subvert our whole Constitution: And I have read, Master, that *Julius Cæsar* overturn'd the *Roman* State by their own Army, which he commanded in foreign Parts. Therefore I think your Proposal reasonable, that the *Imperial* Generals should not be allow'd the Riches they find in the Kingdom of *Naples*, *&c.* for their privy Purse, but bring it to the publick Accompt, for carrying on the War. The Emperor may also remember, by the Instance of Count *Wallenstein*, in the Reign of one of his Predecessors not long ago, how dangerous a Thing it is, to let Generals grow too rich and powerful.

powerful. The Risk he has run of losing *Bavaria* and *Naples* too, thro' the Covetousness of his Ministers, which makes them odious to his Subjects, may farther instruct him how dangerous a Thing it is in Princes to suffer their Authority to be prostituted to the Advancement and enriching of Favourites.

Obs. Leave your Politicks, *Roger*, and tell me the rest of your News.

Country-m. Master, the *French Gazette* says, they have taken *Ciudad Rodrigo*, on the Frontiers of *Portugal*, by Storm, kill'd 200 Men, took 1800, besides 600 Sick and Wounded, with 13 Brass Cannon, 2 Mortars, great store of Ammunition and Provisions, 200 Horses, and 50 Colours and Standards; that they are since march'd to raise the Siege of *Moura*, and have made great Advances in the Siege of *Lerida*; which has occasion'd a great Consternation in *Catalonia*, and a Tumult in *Barcelona*, where the Inhabitants threaten'd to cut off all the *English* and *Germans*, if the Arch-duke left the Country.

Obs. That's all bad enough, *Roger*; but we know the *French* are not accustom'd to lessen their Advantages more than other People; at the same time 'tis plain they understand their Interest, and pursue it with Vigor: They know the Preservation of *Spain* and the *West Indies*, to be their chief Business, and apply themselves to it accordingly; whereas (by what fatal Neglect, or strange Conduct, God knows) the Allies lose Ground there every Day. And for the *West Indies*, the *French* know how to bring Bullion from thence, for the Service of the Duke of *Anjou*, while King *Charles* must be maintain'd at the Expence of his Friends and Allies, as if he had no Title to the Silver and Gold Mines in *Mexico* and *Peru*, or wanted Hands or Bottoms to bring Home their Produce. This seems pretty strange, *Roger*, and shows a vast Difference betwixt the Conduct of the Houses of *Austria* and *Bourbon*, the latter strikes at the Root, and the former stands lopping of Branches.

Country-m. I think verily, Master, you are in the Right; for the *French* King, when his Grandson had in a Manner lost *Spain*, let him sleep but a few Nights, 'till he recover'd Possession; but King *Charles* is drove out at both Ends of the Kingdom, and so has continu'd a long Time, without Assistance sufficient to re-enter *Spain*. I hope, Master, that the Causes of those Misfortunes will be inquir'd into, and prevented, that we may not spend our Money and Blood to no Purpose; for if the House of *Bourbon* be left in Possession of *Spain* and the *West Indies*, we have fought so many Years for nothing; and instead of restoring a Ballance of Power in *Europe*, shall lose it for ever.

Obs. If the Discontents in *Catalonia*, and the Danger of *Lerida*, be as the *French* represent it, *Roger*, it's high Time for the Allies to think of sending King *Charles* speedy Relief.

Country-m. It ought to be speedy indeed, Master; for the *French* News say, they are equipping 40 Men of War at *Thoulon*, to recover *Naples*, as 'tis given out; but I rather believe them design'd for *Catalonia*, or *Spain*, in order to push on the *French* Conquests there, and dispossess King *Charles* at once, before the Allies can come to his Relief: For I don't think that the *French* King will endanger the Loss of *Spain*, for the Sake of recovering *Naples*, as other People have done for the Sake of taking it.

Obs. And not only so, *Roger*, but they lost the Design on *Thoulon* too; which, had it succeeded, must have disabl'd the *French* King from giving us any Disturbance by Sea in the *Mediterranean*, and have assur'd King *Charles* of the Possession of *Catalonia*, 'till the rest of his Dominions had been recover'd; whereas now he is in Danger of having his Capital attack'd again, before our Fleet can come to his Assistance, since we have no Port in the *Mediterranean* to winter our Ships in. But more of this next Time, *Roger*.

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